

There are some legitimate concerns from members of the Armed Services Committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, the Government Affairs Committee, and the Intelligence Committee about how do we deal with national security issues; how can we carve out national security issues; how can we make sure it is not a unilateral decision made by the Commerce Department; and how are the State Department and Defense Department going to be involved.

But a lot of work is being done on that. I am hoping we can go forward on that bill Tuesday or Wednesday of this week and find a way to complete it. But we will not be able to do it unless we find cooperation on both sides of the aisle, and I hope maybe the education bill can be an example we can follow. It may even be easier in this case because I think there is actually broader bipartisan support.

So I appreciate what Senator REID had to say. I agree with it. I hope that is the example we can use as we go forward this year. We have a lot of work. In spite of distractions, in spite of elections, we still have work to do for the American people. It is important we find a way to do that for the best interests of our country.

I thank Senator REID for his contribution in that effort.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to the leader, I think we should be given even more leeway. I think we can get a lot more done. I don't think, on legislation, there would be the disaster that the leader believes. But I think we have made some progress, and I look forward to seeing if we can make more progress. The export administration bill, as the leader said, is a bill that has wide bipartisan support, and we should move forward on this, even though we have some people concerned about it. That is what the process is all about. They should come down and talk about their concerns, vote on it, and move it on. If there were ever a high-tech issue this congressional session, it is this bill. So the high-tech industry can remain competitive and keep that business we so value in the United States, we have to pass this bill or very quickly the business will be going offshore.

I thank the leader very much, and I look forward to continued progress on legislation to help the country.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business until 5 p.m. Under the previous order, the time until 1 p.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his des-

ignee. Under the previous order, time will be under the control of the Senator from Wyoming, Mr. THOMAS, or his designee, from 1 o'clock to 2 o'clock.

The Senator from Nevada.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we are all very proud of Senator BYRD. I have had the good fortune over my career—in the business part of it as an attorney and as a government official—to work with people who, for lack of a better description, are very smart. I have to say I have not seen anyone who has more intellectual capacity than ROBERT BYRD.

How many people do you know who can recite poetry for 8 hours without ever reciting the same poem twice? He can do that.

How many people do you know have actually studied and read the Encyclopedia Britannica? Senator BYRD has.

How many people do you know have used a congressional break to study the dictionary and read every word in the dictionary? Senator BYRD has done that.

Those of us who serve with him in the Senate, and especially those who serve with him on the Appropriations Committee, are every day amazed at his brilliance. His congressional service has been brilliant. I look forward to his reelection this year and his continued service in the Senate. It has been a remarkable pleasure for me to serve with Senator BYRD.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when I was a little boy, I lived in the town of Searchlight, NV. One of my brothers, who is 10 years older than I, worked for Standard Stations. He was assigned to a place called Ashfork, AZ, which to me could have been as far away as New York City because I had never traveled anywhere.

When I was a young boy of 11 years, he allowed me to spend a week with him in Ashfork, AZ. My brother had a girlfriend. The thing I remember most about my journey to Ashfork, AZ. The girlfriend had a brother about my age, or a year or so older. We would play games. I never won a single game, not because I should not have, but because he kept changing the rules in the middle of the game. It does not matter what the game was; as I started to win, he would change the rules. So I returned from Ashfork never having won anything, even though I should have won everything.

The reason I mention that today is that is kind of what campaign finance is all about in America. The rules keep changing, not for the better, but for the worse. They are complicated. They are impossible to understand.

I was recently criticized because I did not disclose the names of people who

gave to my leadership fund. Why didn't I? The reason I did not is that I did not legally have to. The most important reason, however, is that people who gave to my fund said: Do you have to disclose my name? And I said no, which was true. That is the law; I did not have to.

Over the last several weeks, there have been a number of people writing about the fact I have not disclosed who gave me the money and how much it was. I made a decision that even though it was unnecessary legally for me to do that, I would disclose those names. I could not do that, however, until I went back to the people whom I told I would not make a disclosure and got their permission to do so. I am happy to report I was able to do that. Everyone understood, and they said: Go ahead, I would rather you did not do it, but you have told me why you have to do it; go ahead and do that.

That goes right to the heart of what is wrong with the campaign finance system in America today. There is no end to what is politically correct, but yet if a person follows the legal rules, it still may not be politically correct. It is a Catch-22. No matter what one does in the system, it is wrong; people of goodwill trying to do the right thing are criticized.

We have to do something. Everything I have done with my Searchlight fund, as it is called, is totally legal. I have not done anything wrong. It has been checked with lawyers and accountants. In fact, when people came to me and said, do you have to disclose my name? I checked to make sure I was giving them the right information when I said no.

I thought it was important to follow the law, and I have done that. It was important for me to keep my word. Where I grew up, there was not a church and there was not a courthouse; everything was done based on people's word. If you shook hands with someone or you told them you were going to do something, that was the way it had to be, and that is the way I felt about disclosing these names.

It was very hard for me and somewhat embarrassing to go back to these people, and say: May I have your permission to disclose your name, even if you did not want it done? Even though they consented, it was not an easy thing to do.

I have disclosed these names and the money. The problem is the system is simply broken. There are traps set up all along the way for people who are trying to comply with the law. If we comply with the law, sometimes we lose the confidence of the public, who come to believe we are all in the grip of wealthy special interests whose cash carves out ordinary Americans from the system.

Under our current system, money is the largest single factor, some say, in winning a Federal political election, and a lot of times that is true. The dilemma we face is: Too little money,

and you may very well lose your political position; too much money, and the public thinks you are in someone's pocket, for lack of a better description.

I finished an election last year. The State of Nevada at the time of that election had a population of fewer than 2 million people. My opponent and I spent the same amount in State party money and funds from our campaigns. We each spent over \$10 million for a total of \$20 million in a State of less than 2 million people. That does not count all the money spent in that election because there were independent expenditures also. We do not know the amount because there is no legal reason they be disclosed, but I estimate another \$3 million at least.

In the State of Nevada, a State of fewer than 2 million people, we had spent \$23 million. If that is not an example of why we need campaign finance reform, there is not an example. We need to do something now.

I have talked about the State of Nevada, but there are other States in which more money is spent. It is not unusual or uncommon to hear about races costing more money than the \$20 million spent in the State of Nevada. Most of those States have more population, but that is still lot of money.

We know presently there is a controversy in the election that is going to be held in New York tomorrow. Why? In the Republican primary, there has been an independent expenditure of \$2.5 million berating JOHN MCCAIN for his environmental record and for not being supportive of breast cancer research.

Every candidate who is running for President of the United States is for breast cancer research. I have already given one example of how much it costs in the State of Nevada and why we need to do something about campaign finance reform. Certainly, in New York, because of independent expenditures, we need to do something. They are gross; they are absurd; they are obscene—\$2.5 million to distort the record of a fine person, JOHN MCCAIN, indicating that he is opposed to breast cancer research. I am not going to belabor the point and talk about his environmental record, but if one compares it to whom he is running against, it is not that bad. These independent expenditures are wrong, and we should do something about them.

I repeat, our current system is broken and it needs to be fixed.

I have spoken many times in this chamber, going back more than 12 years, about the need to reform the system. I have sponsored and cosponsored many bills for reforming the system, including variations of the McCain-Feingold bill. These bills have never even had a decent debate in this body, let alone passed. We have never been able to invoke cloture.

Those of us who represent our States and want to accomplish good and meaningful things, who want to make this country work better, have to work

within the system the way it is, not the way we wish it were.

As the example shows that I just gave, that is difficult. I follow the law; someone comes to me and says: I want to give you some money. Do you have to disclose it? I say: No. The answer is accurate legally, but I later have to go to that person and say: Well, is it OK if I disclose this?

This is a bad system and it should be changed.

The criticism that has occurred as a result of campaign finance generally should cause us to do a better job. We at least should debate the issues, and ultimately change the law. Should we have campaign ceilings? Do you only spend so much money? Shouldn't we shorten the election cycle somewhat? Can't we do better than what we have? Can't we make it easier for people to register to vote?

I repeat, for the fourth time, the system is broken. It is up to us to save it before people are totally turned off by American politics.

I yield the floor and apologize to my friends for taking so much time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Before he leaves, I commend the distinguished minority whip for speaking out on some of these excesses in campaign finance. He mentions his small State spending more than \$20 million.

Mr. REID. If I can interrupt and ask the Senator to yield, in my State we only have two media markets, only two places to spend the money.

Mr. WYDEN. I think the Senator makes an extremely important point. I recall in the campaign with my friend and colleague, Senator GORDON SMITH, to succeed former Senator Packwood—we are from a small State as well, a little bigger than Nevada—Senator SMITH and I, between us, went through pretty close to \$10 million in about 5 months.

Before the minority whip leaves the floor, I want to tell him I so appreciate him speaking out on this issue.

Certainly in Europe, for example, they are doing some of the things the distinguished minority whip is talking about: shortening the election cycle trying to generate interest in the elections because the campaign is over a short period of time. I think we can do that in this country and require, for example, that the campaign funds be disclosed online, which many of our colleagues have proposed on both sides of the aisle.

I want the Senator to know, before he leaves the floor, I very much appreciate his leadership in speaking out on this campaign finance issue, because we saw in Oregon much of what the Senator saw in Nevada.

Mr. REID. I say to my friend from Oregon, I think one of the things that is happening in Oregon is exemplary; that is, people can vote at home. That was an experiment in the Senator's election. We were all worried it would not work out right, but it worked out

fine. But that is something we need to do: Make it easier for people to vote.

We have a Presidential election that is heating up now. But you know, people are talking about getting ready to run in the next election already. This is not good for the system. As the Senator has said, we have to do something to shorten the election cycle so people have more condensed elections.

There are many different ways to communicate now. We have all this cable, and we have to look for a better way of doing it, and making it so money is not the predominant factor in the political race.

Mr. WYDEN. What the minority whip has essentially said is: We have what amounts to a permanent campaign. You have the election the first Tuesday in November; people sleep in on Wednesday; and then the whole thing starts all over again on Thursday.

It is time, in effect, to turn off this treadmill and, heaven forbid, come to the floor and talk about issues, such as prescription drugs, which I have tried to focus on for a number of months now. Many of our colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, want to talk about that, and the Patients' Bill of Rights, and education. To the extent that campaign finance dominates so much of the American political focus, it detracts from those issues.

I commend the minority whip. I thank him for his excellent presentation.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR BYRD

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before I go on to touch on the issue of prescription drugs for a few moments, I, too, join with the majority leader, Senator LOTT, and the minority whip, Senator REID, in congratulating Senator BYRD on the anniversary of his Senate service.

I think what is especially striking about Senator BYRD's contributions is that when so many get tired, and so many get frustrated and exasperated with public service—we all know there is plenty in which you can be frustrated about—Senator BYRD does not give up. He does not flinch from the kinds of travails of public service. He seems to get stronger and stronger.

Those of us who watch him and seek him out for his counsel very much appreciate his contributions to the Senate. But this Senator especially appreciates one of his traits, which I think is the hallmark of being successful in any field, and that is his persistence. He is persistent about public service. He is persistent about upholding the standards of the Senate.

I join with the majority leader, Senator LOTT, and the minority whip in congratulating our friend and colleague, Senator BYRD.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, since the fall, I, and other Members of the Senate, have come to the floor of this body